



Fire Department

8401 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PHONE 480-312-8000
FAX 480-312-1887
WEB www.Scottsdalefd.com

To: All City of Scottsdale Golf Course Managers

From: Jim Ford – Deputy Chief of Fire & Life Safety

Re: Upcoming 2008 Wildland Fire Season

Date: February 28, 2008

The Scottsdale Fire Department is asking you to be proactive and help us address the threat associated with this year's wildfire season. The winter and spring rains are expected to result in additional growth of plant material during the spring growing season. As in years past, these new fuels will dry out and provide increased potential for fire incidents during our warm summer months.

Scottsdale's local golf courses have a unique opportunity to provide additional resources to help the fire department address our wildfire control issues. The Fire Department would like to work with these facilities to put in place a series of recommendations and guidelines that will help prevent and control any wildfire incidents that occur near a golf course. We encourage you to contact us to identify the individual site risks and to assist your facility with the development of an effective plan.

Recommended checklist of safety items:

- Recommend that all golfers be advised of the local daily weather and wildfire potential and to quickly notify the golf course staff or initiate a 911 call if they discover or suspect a wildfire incident has occurred.
- Restrict smoking while on the course, especially in the wildland interface areas.
- On courses that have interface areas with the Sonoran Desert, develop a recognized "buffer zone" adjacent to tee boxes, fairways, and greens. Thin vegetation and clear flammable flash fuels (dried grasses and weeds) for an area of 20-30 feet from the playing surfaces. There is no need to clear natural live desert plants, just maintain these areas and clear the annual dry flash fuels.
- For an area of 10-15 feet in width, thin and clean flash fuels from the edge of the golf cart paths that pass through natural desert areas.
- In the "buffer" zones, trim overgrown tree limbs so they do not touch the flash fuels or serve as a possible fuel ladder from the desert floor.
- Pick up all dead and down cacti and tree limbs in these identified "buffer" zones.

- Remove all light (flash) fuels around the perimeter of the course in an area of at least 10 to 20 feet from the edge of all roadways.
- Rangers need to be aware of the increasing wildfire risk and can serve to provide additional eyes for the quick identification of an incident and initiation of an early notice for response by the fire department.
- Rangers, beverage carts, and maintenance personnel should carry an approved fire extinguisher and a means to quickly communicate with the clubhouse.
- Maintenance personnel should have access to quick connect sprinklers in order to provide an additional water source for the golf course and the adjacent desert in the event of a local wildfire event.
- Recommend that all maintenance carts be equipped with small hoses that can be connected and used throughout the course.
- To raise the awareness and effectiveness of facility employees and maintenance personnel, members of the Scottsdale Fire Department can conduct wildfire safety awareness classes.
- Based on the capabilities of an individual facility, local resource teams could be established for quick response and possible early intervention of a small incident prior to the arrival of the fire department. In the event of a major wildfire incident, these local resources (team leaders) can assist the fire department incident commander with ground sprinkler coverage, possible golf course evacuation, fire department access, and any local water supply questions.

Wildland fires are a naturally occurring event here in the Southwest. However, most of the local fire incidents we experience are human caused and not a natural event. The goal of the Scottsdale Fire Department is to decrease the number of incidents through education and prevention methods, and to reduce the impact of the incidents that occur through proper safety measures, resource deployment, and fuel management.

The Fire and Life Safety Division of the Scottsdale Fire Department would like to help your facility to address and be prepared for a possible wildfire incident. Please contact us at (480) 312-1855 with any questions and/or to set up an on-site meeting and evaluation.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance with keeping Scottsdale a safe and beautiful community for our residents and visitors.